

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 04004

LIMDIS

NOFORN

DEFENSE PASS TO ASD/ISA AND DIA

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: UK, SU, BEXP, MASS
SUBJECT: WINSTON CHURCHILL'S VIEWS ON SALE OF UK ENGINE
COMPONENTS TO USSR

REF: LONDON 2816

1. UPON RETURN FROM A VISIT WITH US FORCES IN GERMANY
THE EVENING OF 8 MARCH 1977, WINSTON CHURCHILL (SHADOW
SPOKESMAN ON DEFENSE), IN CONVERSATION WITH US AIR
ATTACHE (AIRA) ASKED IF CALLAGHAN WAS STILL GOING TO
WASHINGTON. IN RESPONSE TO AIRA'S AFFIRMATIVE REPLY
CHURCHILL SAID, "WELL, I CERTAINLY HOPE THAT SOMEONE
IN YOUR GOVERNMENT LAYS DOWN THE LAW TO MY GOVERNMENT
ABOUT INCREASING THE RANGE OF THE BACKFIRE." CHURCHILL
EXPLAINED HE WAS REFERRING TO THE LUCAS AEROSPACE AND
PLESSEY AEROSPACE SALE OF CONCORDE ENGINE COMPONENTS
TO THE USSR FOR THE TU-144 CONCORDSKI SUPERSONIC AIR-
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LINER. HE THEN SAID THAT PRESIDENT CARTER OR SECRETARY
VANCE OUGHT TO GRAB CALLAGHAN OR OWEN "BY THE SCRUFF
OF THE NECK" AND SOMETHING TO THE EFFECT OF READING THE
RIOT ACT TO THEM ABOUT THE SALE. HE SAID THAT IF ANY-
ONE BELIEVED MOD MULLEY'S STATEMENT THAT HE (MULLEY)
WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE USSR WOULD ONLY USE THE ENGINE
COMPONENTS ON THE CONCORDSKI AND NOT ON THE BACKFIRE,

THEY WERE "OUT OF THEIR MINDS." CHURCHILL SAID IN
HIS OPINION THE COMPONENTS WOULD GO ON THE BACKFIRE
LONG BEFORE THEY EVER SAW A TU-144.

2. COMMENT: WE ARE NOT AWARE WHICH MULLEY STATEMENT
CHURCHILL IS REFERRING TO; IT MAY HAVE BEEN MADE TO
CHURCHILL IN PRIVATE. CHURCHILL APPEARED VERY SINCERE
IN HIS BELIEFS AND WAS VISIBLY EMOTIONAL AS HE MADE
THE ABOVE COMMENTS. WE INFER THAT CHURCHILL THINKS
THE GOVERNMENT IS MOVING CLOSER TO APPROVING THE SALE
CF THE ENGINE COMPONENTS TO THE USSR. REQUEST GUIDANCE
ON RESPONSE TO MR. WELLBELOVED, UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE
(RAF), DISCUSSED IN REFTEL. END COMMENT.

MILLER

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Message Attributes

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